

DFS QUARTERLY

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6th Edition of Building Code on Smoke and Heat Detector Requirements in 1 & 2 Family Dwellings In Effect

In early April, State Fire Marshal Coan sent to all Fire Chiefs a copy of an Official Interpretation from the State Board of Building Regulations and Standards to All Building Officials regarding the Smoke and Heat Detector Requirements in One- and Two-Family Dwellings – Section 3603.16 of the Sixth Edition of the State Building Code. Highlights of that interpretation include:

Photoelectric Section of 6th Edition of Building Code in Place

When installing a smoke detector within 20' (twenty feet) of a bathroom or kitchen, it must be a

photoelectric detector.

Ionization Detectors Still Permitted



Ionization detectors are still permitted when installed at a distance greater than 20' from a kitchen or bathroom.

Heat Detectors Are NOT Required

At this time heat detectors are not required.

If you need an additional copy of this official interpretation, please contact the Office of the State Fire Marshal at (978) 567-3300 and ask for Code Compliance. (See related article of page 12.) ♦



From the Desk of the Fire Marshal

Stephen D. Coan

As summer approaches a new set of fire and burn hazards confront the Fire Service and the public we protect. It is a time of backyard barbecues, camping out, mowing lawns, the Fourth of July holiday, going to the beach, and traveling. We are enclosing a pamphlet for your use in educating your community on how to be safe when enjoying these activities called *Summer Fire Safety*.

Remind people to check the connections on the gas grill before using it, especially at the beginning of the summer when it hasn't been used all winter. Remind people not to add lighter fluid to a barbecue that is already lit. They may not realize that the fluid can ignite and travel upstream to the can in their hand.

Remind people to *Leave the Fireworks to the Professionals*. All fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts because they are so dangerous. Families should enjoy the many wonderful supervised displays across the state. The Department of Fire Services will be working hard this year to educate the citizens of Massachusetts about the dangers of fireworks. It may be hard to believe, but sparklers can burn

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June 28 – Save the Date!

Western Massachusetts Fire Safety Day

The Department of Fire Services is sponsoring a Family Fire Safety Day on Sunday, June 28 at the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition (the "Big E" Fairgrounds) in West Springfield. The New England Association of Fire Chiefs and the New England Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs are holding their four-day conference. Fire/Rescue New England '98 at the "Big E" June 26-29. Before and after the apparatus parade on Sunday the 28th

(11:30-12:30), the Department of Fire Services and local fire departments will have family activities, interactive educational exhibits and demonstrations. This is an effort to promote community fire education and the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program. Our thanks to all the SAFers who have stepped forward to help plan and present these activities. Prevent Blindness Massachusetts is partnering with us around the

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Children's Sleepwear Flammability Standards

The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's flammability standards for children's sleepwear have their roots in Massachusetts. Dr. Andrew McGuire was a physician at Shriners Burn Institute in Boston in the mid-seventies when noticed he was treating many children who were burned while wearing nightgowns and pajamas. His efforts lead to the state standards for children's sleepwear flammability that are still in existence under the Department of Public Health. The U.S. CPSC soon adopted flammability standards for children's sleepwear and our state standards reference the federal requirements.

The incidence of burns to children while wearing sleepwear dropped dramatically. These standards were an unqualified success.

In 1996, the CPSC voted to relax the standards for sleepwear for children age 0-9 months and for tight-fitting sleepwear for older children. The following are two press releases, one from the CPSC about their decision, and one from the National Fire Protection Association asking them to reconsider.

Representatives Rosa DeLauro (CT), Robert Andrews (NY) and Curt Weldon (PA) have recently introduced legislation that directs the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to reinstate their old standards on children's sleepwear flammability.

March 25, 1998

CPSC's Sleepwear Amendment to Help Reduce Burn Injuries to Children

WASHINGTON, D.C. - To reduce burn injuries associated with oversize cotton garments such as T-shirts, sweats and other daywear garments used as sleepwear, CPSC amended the sleepwear standard

under the Flammable Fabrics Act. Baggy or loose-fitting cotton or cotton blend garments ignite easily and burn quickly when they contact a flame. Loose-fitting daywear used as sleepwear is associated with 200 to 300 emergency room-treated burn injuries to children annually.

The amendment does not change the existing requirements for loose-fitting garments, which must continue to be flame-resistant. Parents can still choose polyester and other synthetic garments that are inherently flame-resistant. CPSC encourages parents not to put children to bed in loose-fitting cotton garments such as oversize T-shirts, but to choose safe sleepwear alternatives.

The Commission's amendment to the children's sleepwear standard under the Flammable Fabrics Act permits for sale as children's sleepwear 1) natural fabric garments in sizes nine months or lower because infants who wear these sizes are insufficiently mobile to expose themselves to sources of fire, and 2) tight-fitting natural fabric garments in sizes above nine months because tight-fitting garments are less likely to be ignited and they burn slowly.

This amendment enables consumers who prefer to put their children to bed in cotton garments to choose safer, tight-fitting garments rather than loose-fitting daywear, such as T-shirts and sweats. The

tight-fitting sleepwear contacts the skin at all points to protect children from burn injuries. Tight-fitting sleepwear is not easily ignited, and even if it ignites, it burns slowly and may self-extinguish because of a lack of oxygen to support the flame.

CPSC has found no burn injuries associated with tight-fitting garments.

Retail stores are starting to carry the new tight-fitting garments in the sleepwear section of the store, along with the traditional flame-resistant sleepwear.

CPSC wants to work with fire fighters, pediatricians, retailers and manufacturers to make parents aware of the importance of putting their children to bed in tight-fitting or flame-resistant sleepwear to keep them safe from burn injuries.

The vote on amending the standard was two to one with Commissioners Thomas Moore and Mary Sheila Gall voting in the majority, and Chairman Ann Brown voting in the minority.

NFPA Renews Call for Reinstatement of CPSC Children's Sleepwear Standard

Flawed New Standard is Already Crumbling

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), America's foremost advocate for safety from unwanted fire, today renewed its call for a return to the previously successful standard governing the

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The **DFS Quarterly** is published every March, June, September, and December. If you have some newsworthy information to share with the fire service, you are welcome to submit articles to:

Jennifer Mieth, Editor, **DFS Quarterly**, Dept. of Fire Services, P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775. (978) 567-3381 or Internet Address: Jennifer.Mieth@state.ma.us

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Children's Sleepwear

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fire resistance of children's sleepwear.

That proven standard was relaxed in 1996 by a 2-1 vote of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

NFPA urges Commissioners Mary Sheila Gall and Thomas Hill Moore, who voted in favor of the change, to reopen this issue and to join with CPSC Chairman Ann Brown, who opposed the change.

There are new facts since the vote that justify reopening the issue: Two years later, the new relaxed standard has yet to be implemented, as industry pleads for further relaxation.

But industry has provided no evidence — or even an argument — that fire safety comparable to that provided by the old standard would be delivered.

The central argument that supported the decision to make the change in the standard has crumbled and been abandoned.

NFPA President George D. Miller called on the commissioners of the CPSC to "take official notice of these developments and reverse its 1996 decision before real harm occurs on a massive scale to real children." NFPA urged the Commission to recognize that every event since the 1996 vote has been another step away from acceptable fire safety.

"We urge Chairman Brown to once again articulate the dangers posed by the relaxed standard, which she identified so eloquently in support of her 1996 vote," Miller said.

"NFPA urges Commissioner Mary Sheila Gall to reconsider and reverse her vote of 1996.

We are moving down a path that

will lead to no fire-resistant sleepwear for children.

Knowledgeable, responsible parents will find that as consumers they cannot choose safety.

We call on Commissioner Gall to act to prevent the tragedy of serious burns from touching America's families," continued NFPA President Miller.

"NFPA urges Commissioner Thomas Hill Moore to reconsider and reverse his vote of 1996," Miller concluded.

Commissioner Moore specified steps he deemed necessary to implementation, including an extensive consumer education campaign.

Industry has failed to reach consensus on such a campaign and seems likely to treat it with no more than lip service, even as they press their requests to gut the design features — a tight fit — intended to provide safety to children.

"We call on Commissioner Moore to see that his original concerns on this issue were correct: The old standard is still necessary and must be restored," Miller emphasized.

As NFPA said in 1995, adoption of the new, relaxed standard will be an experiment with no acceptable early warning of failure.

NFPA makes these pleas for action now, rather than waiting for years of experience with the new relaxed standard.

NFPA President Miller said, "We cannot wait for proof of failure in the form of burned children in our hospitals.

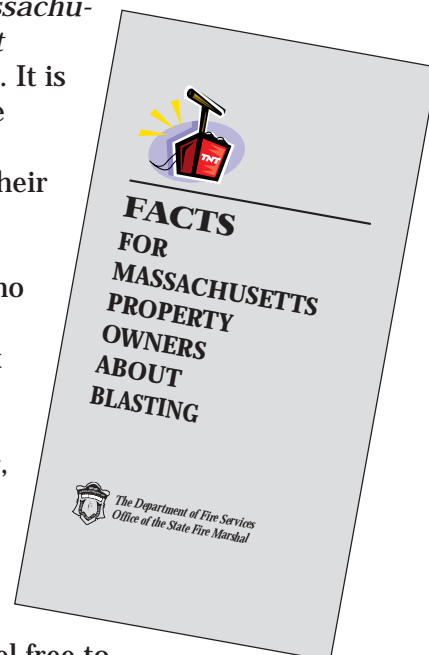
We knew enough when the vote was taken in 1996 not to risk that outcome, but we know more now, and everything we have learned underscores the threat we face.

We can and we must return to the time-proven children's sleepwear standard." ♦

Facts for Massachusetts Property Owners About Blasting

A new pamphlet, *Facts for Massachusetts Property Owners About Blasting*, will be available in June. It is designed specifically for those fire departments that frequently have blasting projects taking place in their communities. The pamphlet is a public relations tool that can be distributed to property owners who may be exposed to a blasting project. Outlined in the pamphlet are the key parts of the blasting regulation – 527 CMR 13, a few reminders for the property owner, and contact information should there be additional questions from the property owner.

Should you have a blasting project planned or in progress, feel free to call the Office of the State Fire Marshal (978) 567-3300 after June 1 for packages of these new pamphlets. ♦



FIRE AND EXPLOSION INVESTIGATION UNIT

The following is an update on several fire investigations that recently came to conclusion by cause determination, conviction, arrest or indictment.

Ashland Homeowner Convicted of Arson

William Southard was found guilty by a jury in Cambridge Superior Court of arson and insurance fraud for a February 3, 1995 Ashland fire.

Mr. Southard of Central Street in Holliston, was the owner of a rental property at 250 Union Street in Ashland. Investigators from the Ashland Fire and Police Departments and the Office of the State Fire Marshal as well as insurance investigators all contributed to the development of the evidence that lead to a successful prosecution by Assistant District Attorney Michael Friedland. Investigation revealed that the fire was intentionally set and synthetic fireplace logs were found in burned debris in the basement where the fire started. Prosecutors from Middlesex District Attorney Thomas Reilly's Office believe the motive was financial. One factor was that the housing authorities had turned down a recent request for a rent increase.

Chelsea Arsonist Indicted for \$250,000 Thanksgiving Fire

Peter Van Tran was indicted by a Suffolk County grand jury March 18 for arson with intent to defraud his insurance company and four counts of injuring a firefighter. The \$250,000 fire at 279-285 Broadway in Chelsea went to seven alarms, took 18 hours to put out by 130 firefighters from ten surrounding communities.

The first alarm for this fire was received at 10:47 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26, 1997, the night before Thanksgiving. It started in the basement of the *La Paloma* store Mr. Van Tran leased from the building owner. It is alleged that Van Tran was looking to collect on an insurance policy for the business which was not doing well.

Investigators excavating the scene smelled gasoline and one of the State Fire Marshal's Office's three accelerant sniffing dogs was called. The dog made several "alerts" that tested positive for gasoline.

This four-month investigation involved many hours of digging out the scene, interviewing witnesses, checking records and financial histories, and called upon the resources of many investigative agencies. To develop the case for the Suffolk County District Attorney Ralph Martin's Office to indict Mr. Van Tran, it took the team efforts of the Chelsea Fire Department and state police investigators from the Office of the State Fire Marshal, with assistance from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Arrest Made for Arson in Maynard Restaurant Fire

Geraldo Mirando, owner of Sausalito's Mexican restaurant, was arrested Mar. 25 for arson by investigators from the State Fire Marshal's Fire Investigation Unit and the Maynard Police Department. Attempts to serve an arrest warrant on the dishwasher, Atides Silva Santos, revealed that he has fled the country to his native Brazil. Mr. Mirando of 24 Railroad St., Maynard, was held in lieu of

\$10,000 cash bail and was arraigned in Concord District Court. It is thought that the motive was to collect insurance money on a business that was not doing well.

The March 18, 1998 fire started at 57 Main Street inside Sausalito's restaurant at ten minutes to midnight. It destroyed a pizza shop next door and damaged several other businesses in the building.

The suppression of this five-alarm fire required extensive mutual aid from the surrounding communities. "I want to commend the heroic efforts of the firefighters who battled this blaze and kept it from causing further economic destruction to downtown Maynard," said State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan.

The team investigation was led by the Maynard-Acton-Concord regional fire investigation unit and assisted by detectives from the Maynard Police Department and state police members of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit at the Department of Fire Services.

Investigators Determine Medford Fire Electrical

Investigators from the Medford Fire and Police Departments, the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, the Department of Public Safety and the Office of the State Fire Marshal, concluding a joint three-month investigation, have determined that the cause of the December 28, 1997 fire that killed six people in Medford was electrical. After consultation with electrical experts, the investigation team has concluded that the most probable scenario is that the

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Investigations

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fire started in an electrical junction box in the basement where the heaviest fire damage was found.

Around 6:30 that night, a fire started in the basement of 478-480 Main Street and spread rapidly through the 12-unit dwelling. Five members of a single family and a 13-year old resident died in the fire. Although working smoke detectors were found in the building, four of the victims were visiting their father, and were unfamiliar with the building. The Canadian visitors had no escape plan, and were quickly disoriented in the heat and toxic smoke.

"No one who fought this fire or worked on this investigation will ever forget this tragedy or the people who lost their lives that night," said Middlesex District Attorney Tom Reilly.

"I promised the survivors that we would work diligently to find answers," said Medford Fire Chief Lawrence Sands. "This investigation team has done that. This has been an exhaustive, comprehensive investigation."

Killed in the fire were 27 year old Jean Mary and his twenty year old wife Alta-Grace Jean-Risme and their children Jasline, 5, Hansarah, 7, and Kevin, 8-months, and 13-year old Arnel Armornor.

Cause of Revere Fatal Fire Children Playing with Fire

The Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit in the Office of the State Fire Marshal, working in conjunction with the Revere Fire Department, has completed the cause and origin phase of the investigation into the tragic April 8, 1998

Fire Safety Day

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issue of fireworks safety this year.

They will be holding their *Light the Night for Sight Walkathon* on June 28. Walkers will raise community awareness about the huge risk of eye injury the illegal

use of fireworks poses, as well as raise money for the organization. The walkathon will end at the **Family Fire Safety Day** inside the "Big E" and walkers will be treated to a barbecue picnic.

Some of the activities scheduled include: Sparkles the Clown, Pluggie the Talking Fire Hydrant, the Singing Fire Chief, the Hampshire County Fire Safety House, trying on junior fire gear, learning to use hoses, having a photo taken as a firefighter, a demonstration by a new explosives canine and a trained handler, Freddie the Fire Truck.

Registration for the *Light the*



Night for Sight Walkathon will take place from 11:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The walk will start at 4:00 and go till 5:00. The picnic supper will be held 5:00-6:30 PM. For information call Prevent Blindness at (617) 489-0007.

For information about the **Western Mass. Family Fire Safety Day** call Tom McGowan at the DFS (978) 567-3387. For more information about the New England Association of Fire Chief's Conference call Chief Wehter (781) 741-8126. ♦

fatal fire which killed two preschool age children. The origin of the fire was the second floor bedroom of 50 Morris Street, Revere. The cause has been determined to be children playing with fire.

Tragedy of Children Playing with Fire

In 1997 there were two fatal fires in Massachusetts which killed three youngsters caused by children playing with matches, lighters or other heat sources. In

1996, children playing with fire caused 888 reported fires, two civilian deaths, 69 civilian injuries, 45 fire service injuries and an estimated dollar loss of \$4 million.

32 Children Dead Since 1991

From 1991 to date in 1998, 32 children have died in fires started by children playing with fire. The oldest victim was ten years old. ♦

From the Desk of the Fire Marshal

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at 1800 degrees F. We tell our children not to touch the oven that may be heated to 350 degrees, yet some people still think it is safe to let youngsters play with sparklers.

Sunscreen is important not only to prevent future cancers, but to prevent serious burn injuries. Each year people receive sunburns so serious over more than five per cent of their body surface area, that these burns are reported to the state burn registry in our office called the *Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System* (M-BIRS pronounced embers).

When traveling, people should carry a smoke detector, ask for sprinklered accommodations and learn to count the doors from their room to the exit stairs or outside exit.

LP-Gas Grills

According to the 1997 Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data, there were 91 incidents reported that involved gas grills. One firefighter was injured and there was an estimated \$249,948 in property damages. Sixty-four (64), or 70% of the gas grill-caused fires in 1997 took place from May to August.

On June 21, 1997 at 7:05 pm the Sterling Fire Department was called to a fire in a single family home. One firefighter was injured and there was \$150,000 in property damage.

The Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System in 1997 received reports of seven people injured between May 22, 1997 and August 29, 1997 by gas grill incidents. Six males with ages

ranging from 20 to 50 years of age and one female age one were treated for burn injuries due to gas grill fires in Massachusetts hospitals.

On May 22, 1997 a 20-year old man was burned on 5% of his body by the flame from a gas grill at his workplace.

On June 11, 1997 a 35-year old Revere man was burned on his face and arm by the flame from a gas grill.

One July 9, 1997 a 50-year old man was burned on his hand in Haverhill from contact with a gas grill.

On July 14, 1997 a one-year old girl was burned over 7% of her body from contact with a gas grill in Cambridge.

On August 1, 1997 a 20-year old man was burned over 9% of his body from flame from a gas grill in Boston.

On August 4, 1997 a 31-year old man burned his eyes from a gas grill in Lawrence.

On August 29, 1997 a 33-year old man was burned over 30% of his body when a gas grill exploded in Quincy.

49 Incidents Involving Fireworks in 1997

According to the 1997 Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data, there were 49 incidents reported that involved fireworks. One civilian was injured and there was an estimated \$82,141 in property damages. Thirteen (13), or 27% of the fireworks-caused fires in 1997 took place during the week of 4th of July.

On July 6, 1997 the Whitman Fire Department investigated a structure fire in a single family home where a 3-year old boy was

playing with fireworks. The boy was injured with burns on his hand.

On July 4, 1997 the Stoughton Fire Department responded to a fire in a two-family home caused by children playing with fireworks in the livingroom. The estimated property loss of this fire was \$60,000.

According to data from the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System in 1997, four people were injured during the week of the 4th of July by fireworks, and four people were injured at other times of the year. Seven males and one female with ages ranging from 4 to 45 years of age were treated for burn injuries due to fireworks in Massachusetts hospitals.

A 12-year old boy was burned on his face and hands from an M-80 explosion in Pepperell on June 17, 1997.

Two 26-year old men were burned on their hands and necks on Martha's Vineyard on July 4, 1997.

A 41-year old man experienced partial hearing loss and burns on his left and right lower extremities on Martha's Vineyard on July 4, 1997.

A 45-year old man was burned on his lower leg on July 4, 1997 in Falmouth.

A 34-year old man was burned in Lawrence on July 8, 1997.

A 6-year old female was burned on her genitalia from a firecracker in the Greater Boston Area on July 20, 1997.

A 4-year old boy was burned on his right hand by a firecracker in Warren on October 8, 1997.

Let's help keep our citizens safe this summer! ♦

Fire Safety and Security Bars

Excerpted from a new pamphlet available from NFPA's Center for High Risk Outreach. For a copy of the entire pamphlet call Sharon Gamache at (617) 984-7826.

Safe and Secure...?

Due to a heightened fear of crime, people are taking measures to secure their homes and discourage intruders from entering. These actions often are taken without consideration of fire safety. And despite a downward trend in overall fire deaths, the number of fire deaths related to illegal security bars is on the rise. In 1988, five people perished in an incendiary fire in a single-family dwelling in Texas and in 1989, another four lives were lost, also in Texas. Six people perished in a 1990 Florida fire. In 1993, seven children died in a Detroit house fire and eight family members perished in Mississippi. In all these incidents, security bars on windows and locked doors prevented escape from the fire and also inhibited fire fighters' rescue attempts. This information packet on fire safety tips and safe ways to secure your home will help reduce the number of injuries and deaths related to the use of security bars. Following are some of the things you can do to make this very important information available to people in your community and help keep your family, friends, and neighbors safe and secure.

The Problem

- People are afraid of being victims of crime.
- Because of this fear, many people are blockading themselves in their homes.
- Many of the security measures being used to keep criminals OUT are trapping residents IN during emergencies.

- Older adults and children have the greatest risk of dying in a home fire. (They also often need the most help in getting out in an emergency.)
- Most fire deaths related to security bars occur in low-income neighborhoods - already a high-risk population.

Action Steps

- Copy the key messages in this guide and include them in church bulletins, newsletters, and other program guides.
- Copy and distribute the Flyers to senior and day care centers, community organizations, public housing offices, and local stores. (Personalize flyers with agency name.)
- Use local radio and cable TV stations and newspapers to publicize the message.
- Call your fire department for more information on release devices for security bars and request a presentation on fire safety.
- Provide information to local building and housing officials to educate inspectors on recognizing safety and security hazards.
- Call or write your local and state representatives about pending legislation related to security and fire safety.

Key Messages

- All rooms should have both a primary and a secondary exit identified.
- All security-barred windows needed for escape should have quick-release devices that everyone can open.
- Have a working smoke detector.
- Windows should open easily and wide enough to allow escape.
- Locked or barred doors should operate quickly and easily. Make sure everyone knows how to open them.
- Know and practice E.D.I.T.H. - Exit Drills In The Home - and use them to identify and correct obstructions of doors and windows needed for escape. ♦



FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION NEWS

4th Annual Public Fire and Safety Education Conference

The 4th Annual Public Fire and Safety Education Conference will be held September 29-30, 1998 at the Worcester Holiday Inn on Lincoln Street, Worcester. Each year at the conference an outstanding life safety educator is acknowledged with the Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year Award. Do you know a teacher, a firefighter, a nurse, a community organization volunteer that has made a valuable contribution by teaching or promoting fire and safety education?

Curriculum Planning Guidebook

The Massachusetts Curriculum Planning Guidebook is available to life safety educators. This Guidebook was developed over a three year period by the Massachusetts Public Fire and Safety Education Task Force with assistance from the S.A.F.E. Educators in Massachusetts. It is designed to help educators identify their fire problems, select the appropriate fire safety behaviors,

design their programs, implement them and evaluate them. Key fire safety behaviors are presented in a recipe-card format by age group with tips on how to teach the key fire safety behavior to the targeted age group. Each recipe card references resources in the appendix such as lessons in a curriculum, an age appropriate video, or activity sheet. The Guidebook has information for pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The Guidebook was presented to attendees of last year's Fire and Safety Education Conference. To obtain a copy, please send a short written request addressed to: Jennifer Mieth, Public Education Manager, Office of the State Fire Marshal, P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775. Requests may be faxed to: (978) 567-3199 or e-mailed to Jennifer.Mieth@state.ma.us

US Fire Administration Has New Resource Directory

The US Fire Administration has recently published a Resource Directory for public fire educators. It is divided by category such as Burn and Scald Prevention, Escape Plans and Drills. The publication number is FA-172, 6/97.



Fire Prevention Week October 4-10, 1998

The NFPA has announced the theme for Fire Prevention Week in 1998 will be *Fire Drills: The Great Escape*. The NFPA is organizing a North American Fire Drill during Fire Prevention Week. The goal is to encourage as many families as possible to practice their home escape plan in response to the fire stations' alarm as a public fire drill. Instead of the usual media kit, the NFPA will be sending fire departments a tool kit for fire prevention week. ♦

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION INFORMATION

The following are excerpts of notices from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission about consumer products that have been recalled for fire or burn hazards to the public. For a complete copy of the release or more detailed information on what to do if you have one of these products please contact the CPSC directly. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission protects the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury and for information on CPSC's fax-on-demand service, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270. To order a press release through fax-on-demand, call (301) 504-0051 from the handset of your fax machine and enter the release number. Consumers can obtain this release and recall information at CPSC's web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov> or via Internet gopher services at gopher.cpsc.gov. Consumers can report product hazards to info@cpsc.gov. To establish a link from your web site to this press release on CPSC's web site, create a link to the following address: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml98/98090.html>.

April 8, 1998 CPSC, Gerry Baby Products Announce Recall to Repair Baby Monitors

Gerry Baby Products of Denver, Colo., is recalling about 86,000 rechargeable baby monitors sold under the Clear Choice brand name. When an electrical short occurs, the rechargeable battery can cause the monitor's "parent"

unit to smoke and flame. Gerry has received one report of flames and four reports of smoke coming from the monitor's parent unit. No injuries or property damage have been reported. The Gerry Clear Choice rechargeable baby monitor being recalled is Model 618. The model number is found on a silver plate on the front of the monitor's AC adapter. The monitor consists of a "baby" unit, a parent unit, a recharging base for the parent unit and AC adapters. All of the units are white with a light blue accent color. Because it houses the battery, only the parent unit presents the hazard

Honeywell Announces Recall of Heaters and Humidifiers

Honeywell Consumer Products, of Southborough, MA, is recalling about 1.6 million heaters sold under the Duracraft brand name, about 8,000 heaters sold under the DeLonghi brand name and 150,000 humidifiers sold under the Duracraft and Honeywell brand names in the United States and Canada. The heaters and humidifiers can overheat, presenting a fire hazard. Honeywell has received 56 reports of heaters overheating or catching fire, causing one minor injury, and six reports of humidifiers overheating or catching fire. Some of the fires relating to these heaters and humidifiers caused extensive damage.

Only Duracraft model CZ-303, CZ-304, CZ-308, CZ-318, CZ-319 Heat Express and DeLonghi model CER-1 portable electric ceramic heaters are involved in this recall. The model number is located on a silver sticker on the bottom of the heater. The heater is 1500 watts and is colored black. Control knobs are located on the top or front of the unit.

"Heat Express" and "Duracraft" or "DeLonghi" appear on the front of the unit.

Only Duracraft model DH-950 Moisture Select™ humidifiers and Honeywell model HCW-3040 Moisture Select™ humidifiers are involved in this recall. The model number is located on the bottom of the humidifier. The humidifier is colored white and has a clear water tank that holds about two gallons. Control knobs and two output vents (one for cold moisture and one for warm moisture) are located on top of the unit. "Duracraft" or "Honeywell" appears between the two output vents on top of the unit.

Atico International Announce Recall of "Eyeball" and Smiley Face Floating Balls

Atico International USA, Inc., of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., is recalling about 329,000 Halloween Floating Eyeballs and about 100,000 Smiley Face Floating Balls. These balls contain kerosene. If the ball cracks or breaks, kerosene leaking out could poison young children if swallowed. The smaller of these balls also present a serious choking hazard to young children. They lack warning labels required for small balls. CPSC and Atico International USA, Inc. are not aware of any injuries involving these balls. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injuries.

Halloween Eyeballs were sold in two sizes. They measure either 1.5 or 2.25 inches in diameter. They are white with different colored irises and red streaks (resembling bloodshot eyes). All the balls float in kerosene inside a clear outer ball, and are labeled "MADE IN TAIWAN."

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Consumer Information

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CPSC, Warner Bros. Stores Announce Recall of Tweety Key Rings

Warner Bros. Stores Inc., of Burbank, Calif., is recalling about 2,500 Tweety Water Timer Game Key Rings. The key rings contain ethylene glycol, commonly found in antifreeze, that could leak. Ethylene glycol can poison young children if swallowed.

CPSC and Warner Bros. Stores are not aware of any injuries involving these key rings. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injury. The Tweety Water Timer Game Key Ring is a rectangular-shaped clear plastic container with three compartments containing a blue liquid. The middle compartment also contains a yellow wheel and a picture of Tweety at each end. When the rectangle is moved, the liquid flows freely between the compartments, spinning the wheel. A key ring is attached with a small chain. Tweety appears on the front of the key ring.

Sunbeam Products Inc. Announce Recall of Gas Grills With Side Burners

Sunbeam Products Inc., of Neosho Mo., is recalling for repair about 1,800 Grillmaster™ gas grills with side burners. The side burner's propane gas hose can twist up toward the aluminum casting of the grill, causing overheating and melting of the hose. Gas leakage or a fire could result from the hose damage.

Sunbeam Products received four complaints from consumers who requested replacement hoses due to damage caused from the heat of the grill casting. There have been no reports of gas leakage, fire or injury associated with these grills.

The recalled grills are black and have a side burner for cooking, similar to a gas-range stove top. The models number of these grills are GG 461 EPB, GG 560 EPB, HG 560 EPB and GG 560 EPBS.

The complete model numbers can be found on the assembly instructions and parts list. Either "461" or "560" also is located on the front of the grill next to the instrument panel, under the word, "GRILLMASTER."

Chandur Hasso Inc. Announce Recall of Foreign Travel Electric Converters

Chandur Hasso Inc., of New York, N.Y., is recalling 2,400 foreign travel electric converters. These converters could short circuit, presenting fire, shock and thermal burn hazards to consumers.

CPSC and the firm are not aware of any injuries involving these products. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injury. This model CH-1600 electric converter is intended for use by U.S. travelers overseas. It converts international 220/440 volt electricity to 110/120 volts and is rated for 50 to 1,600 watts. The body is plastic on three sides and metal on the other three sides, and has "1600 WATT FOREIGN TRAVEL CONVERTER" imprinted on the front plastic panel. It was sold in a box labeled in part, "SOMITO," "1600 WATTS FOREIGN TRAVEL CONVERTER," "Model CH-1600" and "MADE IN CHINA."

U.S. Customs alerted CPSC to this hazard.

CPSC, Midway Arms Announce Recall of Tumblers

Midway Arms Inc. of Columbia, Mo., is recalling tens of thousands of tumblers, used to clean gun cartridge casings for reloading. The tumbler's motor can over-

heat, presenting a fire hazard. Midway Arms has received 13 reports of motors overheating and catching fire. Five of these fires caused minor and major property damage beyond the tumbler. No injuries have been reported.

Only tumblers sold under the Midway and Past brand names are involved in this recall. The Midway brand tumblers have a blue top and gray base with the words, "Midway...Model 1292...Tumbler" on a sticker on the base. The Past brand tumblers have a tan top and brown base with the word, "Past" on a sticker on the base.

ERA Intermarketing Co. Inc. Announce Recall of Disposable Lighters

ERA Intermarketing Co. Inc. of City of Industry, Calif., is recalling about 840,000 Elite-2 disposable cigarette lighters. The lighters do not meet the 1994 requirement for child-resistant mechanisms in violation of the Consumer Product Safety Act. This act requires a mechanism on disposable and novelty lighters shown to prevent ignition of the lighters by most children under 5 years old. Each year, CPSC estimates 190 deaths are caused by children under 5 years old playing with lighters.

April 15, 1998

CPSC, General Electric Co. Announce Recall of Outlet Converters

General Electric Co.'s GE Lighting division of Cleveland, Ohio, is recalling about 50,000 outlet converters, also known as current taps. They convert a single electrical outlet into three outlets. The ground connector receptacles are oversized and can cause loose ground contacts. Without grounding, consumers are exposed to serious shock hazards.

Continued on page 11

Consumer Information

Continued from page 10

GE has received one report of a loose ground plug. No injuries have been reported.

The outlet converters were sold as "GE Heavy-Duty Grounding Triple Taps." They are made of ivory, orange or green plastic and measure about 4 inches long and 1 inch wide. The GE logo is imprinted on one side of the converter and "15A-125V...CURRENT TAP...MADE IN CHINA" is imprinted on the other side of the converter. A silver UL label also appears on the converter.

May 6, 1998 Ford Recalls Explorers and Mountaineer SUVs

Ford Motor Co. said recently it was recalling as many as 340,000 1997 and 1998 model year Explorer and Mountaineer sport/utility vehicles due to a jump starting problem that could create a fire hazard. The nation's number two automaker also said it was recalling about 25,000 1995 Econoline cutaway and strip-chassis-based vans to address a separate fire hazard related to possible leakage problems of the fuel line. Ford said both recalls are voluntary and neither problem has resulted in fires, accidents or injuries. Regarding the Explorer and Mountaineer recall, Ford said it applies to models with a 4.0-liter SOHC engine.

Amscan Inc. Announce Recall of Floral Candles

Amscan Inc., of Elmsford, N.Y., is recalling 6,000 floral candles. These candles' containers can break and allow hot wax to escape. The hot wax can cause burns and the broken candle container creates a potential fire hazard. ♦

Williamstown Hazardous Materials Response Incident

A runaway truck carrying sulfuric acid and other chemicals crashed into a house near the intersection of Routes 2 and 7 in Williamstown on April 24. The Hazardous Materials Response Teams from D4 and D5 responded along with other firefighters, police and emergency personnel.

Public Safety officials evacuated about 50 people from nearby

homes and businesses and several miles of Routes 2 and 7 were closed to traffic. Highway Department workers built a dike of sand to protect a nearby stream from the spilled chemicals.

The New York driver of the truck said that his brakes had failed at the top of a steep pass on Route 2 westbound. ♦

1998 Hazardous Materials Response Team Incidents

Date	Location	District Team Responding
1/12/98	Wellesley	D2
1/29/98	W. Springfield	D4
1/30/98	Westport	D1
2/10/98	Chicopee	D4
2/20/98	Mansfield	D1
2/23/98	Lenox	D5
2/26/98	Pembroke	D1
2/28/98	Lynn	D2
3/9/98	Hingham	D1
3/11/98	Pittsfield	D5
3/30/98	Peabody	D6
4/2/98	W. Springfield	D4
4/6/98	Danvers	D6
4/16/98	Palmer	D4
4/19/98	Auburn	D3
4/19/98	Marlboro	D3
4/21/98	Sandwich	D1
4/24/98	Williamstown	D5/D4
4/30/98	Longmeadow	D4
5/6/98	Great Barrington	D5
5/10/98	Medford	D2
5/15/98	Littleton	D6

CODE COMPLIANCE NEWS

Omega Sprinkler Update

There have been some recent developments with Omega sprinklers. Since 1995, Omegas have failed to work in fires at a Michigan hotel, a New York Veterans Affairs hospital, an Indiana juvenile detention home, a Maryland bed and breakfast, a California apartment building, a Florida marina, a Milford, Massachusetts rooming house and a college dormitory in Beverly, Massachusetts. On Tuesday May 19, the most recent fire occurred in a 16-unit apartment building in Scottsdale, Arizona. A woman was injured in this incident. This is the first known fire injury associated with the Omega sprinklers that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is seeking to recall.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission was challenged in federal court by Central Sprinkler Corporation who claimed that the sprinkler heads are not consumer products and that the CPSC has no authority in the case. The judge ruled in favor of the CPSC, acknowledging that sprinklers are in fact for the consumer's safety, therefore under the purview of the CPSC.

Several other sprinkler manufacturers have sprinkler heads that are capable of replacing existing Omega. For substitutions it is important to match K factors.

Can I Require Heat Detectors Above and Beyond the Code?

In new construction, the requirements for smoke and heat detection requirements are spelled out in the building code. The requirements for Heat Detectors will be addressed in 3603.16.4 in

780 CMR. This section is currently blank with no requirement to install. At this time individual cities and towns may not require these devices. If a city wants to require them, they should contact the Board of Building Regulations and Standards for directions on how to proceed properly. It should be noted that each instance will be taken on a case by case basis as special conditions arise.

Fire officials should be careful not to get into the habit of designing a fire detection system for owners or installers. You should not be going to a site and pointing to the ceiling with detector locations and spacing. Requiring a heat detector in the garage is not permissible. Many fire officials do not agree with the building code altogether and have made additional requirements, or even less stringent requirements.

These are all scenarios that have played out in some if not all of our offices. What are our obligations and rights? Chapter 148 Sec 28 (God Law) allows us to add to the regulations, doesn't it? Wrong, this law allows only for additional regulations not inconsistent with 527 CMR. It does not allow for a chief to strengthen the Building Code (780 CMR). As the local fire department and local authority, you are responsible only to require what is in the code.

The next time you are asked what do you want in your town, your answer should be, only what is required in the code," unless you have received permission from the BBRS to act otherwise.

Permits

Please remember that when issuing a form FP-2 *Application for License*, FP-5 *Certificate of*

Registration, FP-6 *Generic Application*, FP-7 26F *Certificate of Compliance*, and FP-44 *Application For Tank Truck Approval*, that these forms contain both the application and the actual permit or license.

You should not allow the full document to leave your department, only the permit or license you have issued. Otherwise, the applicant will leave with the permit in hand, whether or not you have signed it. Please be careful with these documents.

Burglar Bar Update

Underwriter's Laboratories is investigating what requirements are needed for release devices on burglar bars. The State Building Code requires every bedroom have at least one operable window. This window if protected by security bars or grates must be able to be opened with no additional force than that needed to open the window. The regulations require a release mechanism that does not need any special keys, tools or other devices to open it. The National Fire Protection Association's Center for High Risk Outreach is leading the charge in this matter.

In Texas three teenage girls were trapped in a fire in mid-May, 1998. The girls were unable to get out of their home and were found together in a bathroom. This is just one more in a string of deadly fires that are attributable to burglar bars preventing escape.

Additional information is available in the 1997 NFPA Life Safety Code Handbook, Supplement Number 7. (See related article in page 7.) ♦

Federal Crackdown on Underground Tanks Yields Thousands of Violations

Last July, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a total of more than 10,050 inspections across the country aimed at identifying and correcting problems at underground storage tanks. The agency found 3,192 violations nationally during the May initiative. In New England, 328 inspections were conducted by federal and state environmental officials, yielding 130 enforcement actions to correct problems with the underground tanks. By December 1998, all tanks must meet state and federal laws that require corrosion protection, spill containment, and overfill protection to safeguard the environment and public health. Over the past nine years, more than 320,000 leaks have been confirmed, 60% of which were leaks to groundwater, from underground storage tanks.

"Only a few months remain for tank owners to close, replace or upgrade leak-prone bare steel tanks," said John P. DeVillars, EPA's New England administrator. "EPA Administrator Carol Browner announced in May that the 1998 deadline will not be extended."

The largest case in New England was brought against the town of Weymouth, Massachusetts, for a number of violations of federal and state environmental laws on the handling of underground storage tanks. In September, 1996, the EPA issued the town a file citation of \$300 for not monitoring one of its underground storage tanks for releases. EPA then requested additional information about all the tanks owned by Weymouth, but the town never responded. Inspectors from the EPA's Underground Storage Tank Program visited each of the town's facilities where there are underground tanks. Numerous deficiencies were noted including failing to conduct leak detection, failing to register an underground tank with the state, failing to install spill containment and overfill prevention requirement and failing to close a tank system that has been out of service for longer than six months. Violations involved 11 tanks at eight facilities, including fire, school, police and public works departments.

The town faces a \$151,793 fine for the violations found.

"Our New England communities have an equal, if not higher, obligation than private companies



New MIS Director

Rebecca Dono Healy has joined our staff as MIS (Management of Information Systems) Director. She joins us from the MIS Department at the Office of the Attorney General. The staff is delighted to welcome the new computer expert; now we have someone to solve all our computer problems. As the System Administrator, she will be responsible for guiding the technological capabilities of the Department of Fire Services, and as a consequence, the Fire Service, into the twenty-first century. ♦

to live by the environmental laws of the country," said DeVillars. "Weymouth, perched within the sensitive groundwater area of the South Coastal Basin, needs to be vigilant in its efforts to see that their own actions do not harm the ecosystem. The environmental risks posed by a leaking underground tank are real. A management program set up ahead of time, can go far in preventing disaster." ♦



UST deadline is December 22, 1998. (Editor's Note: In the March Issue of the DFS Quarterly we mistakenly printed the deadline as December 28, 1998. The correct date is December 22, 1998.)

Recruit Firefighter Training Group

By John Gelinaz

Graduations

The members of Recruit Firefighter Training Class #123 completed the 11-week Recruit Firefighter Recruit Training Program and graduated on Friday, February 6, 1998. The 43 graduates of Class #123 represented the fire departments of Agawam, Auburn, Belmont, Cambridge, Dracut, Easthampton, Falmouth, Holden, Lawrence, Lowell, MassPort, Methuen, Northampton, Norton, Norwell, Salem, Saugus, Seekonk, Stoughton, Taunton, Tewksbury, and Wellesley. Four recent graduates, all Taunton Firefighters, Douglas Gaudet, Leonard Williams, Eric Dumont, and Michael Pitsley, spoke during the graduation exercises about their experiences during the recent, successful rescue of a woman trapped in a building fire in Taunton.

Forty-four members of Class #124 graduated on April 17, 1998. At this graduation ceremony, Father James Seymour, the Lawrence Fire Department Chaplain, spoke on the tradition, training, and calling of the fire service. Father Seymour also remembered Lawrence Fire Lieutenant Toye, who had died in the line of duty during the previous week. Class # 124 had students from the cities and towns of Amesbury, Billerica, Burlington, Cambridge, Danvers, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Manchester, MassPort, Milford, North Andover, Norton, Randolph, Revere, Rockland, Seekonk, Swampscott, and Waltham.

Forty-four individuals, members of Class #125, began their training on April 13. They will graduate eleven weeks later on June 26, 1998 as a team of well-trained firefighters.

History and Tradition

Visit Classroom 128 to view the 100 year old, wooden, Pompier ladder. This Pompier (or scaling ladder) was donated by the Boston Fire Department through the efforts of Ted Maiorana. It is on display to remind the recruits of the steep history behind today's fire training. Thanks to Joe Silva, John Blood, and Steve Raffa for mounting this 16' pomp in the classroom.

Fitness Training

Fourteen recruit program instructors recently completed an intense, 40-hour fitness trainer program conducted by Patti Mantia. All 14 are now professionally certified to the level of "Certified Personal Trainer and Group Exercise Leader." These instructors have taken a leadership role in planning, scheduling, implementing, and tracking the physical training aspect of the recruit program as applied specifically to the firefighter. Physical training and wellness is a serious, structured program but is just one component of the complete firefighter training program.

"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude".

— General Colin L. Powell

Slim Jim Incidents Unfounded: An Urban Legend

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued the following memorandum in January, 1998 to all First Responders. It states that the rumors of a law enforcement officer being killed or injured when using a slim jim to open a locked car door by a sudden side impact air bag deployment are false. They have researched all alleged incidents and have found no verification that any ever occurred.

Over the past several months, a number of bulletins and stories have been circulating throughout the law enforcement and emergency service community about side impact air bag deployments resulting from a slim jim. These bulletins claim that an officer, using a slim jim, was injured or killed while attempting to open a locked driver's door equipped with side impact air bags. The National Highway traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has researched these claims and has discussed this issue with manufacturers of vehicles equipped with side impact air bags. NHTSA has been unable to verify that any incidents of the types described have occurred. Additional, NHTSA contacted the automobile manufacturers of vehicles equipped with side impact air bags, who categorically state that it is impossible to deploy the side impact air bags by using a slim jim from outside of their vehicles. For further information or to report incidents related to this subject, contact the NHTSA Special Crash Investigation: 24 hour voice mail # (202) 493-0400

24 hour facsimile mail # (202) 493-0400

Internet E-Mail address:
airbag.crash@nhtsa.dot.gov ♦

New National Data on Public Misconceptions About Fire:

Survey from the National Fire Protection Association

Reveals Most Americans Underestimate Fire's Power and Speed

October 1, 1997, Quincy, MA — You just threw a party at your home and have gone to bed. Unbeknownst to you, one of your guests unknowingly dropped a cigarette butt on the living room sofa earlier in the evening, and it's now smoldering between the cushions. How long do you have to escape between the time the cigarette fully ignites the sofa and the fire becomes deadly? If you answered more than two minutes, you're not alone.

According to a survey released today by the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 58% of 500 Americans surveyed believed they had more than two minutes to escape a home fire. Twenty-four percent of the respondents assumed they had 10 minutes or more before life-threatening conditions would develop. In reality, a typical living room fire can become deadly in two minutes or less after the smoke alarm sounds. And such a fire almost certainly has the potential to kill household members in as little as four and a half minutes after it initially began.

Designed to measure people's attitudes toward fire and the need for escape planning, NFPA's survey reveals that Americans have dangerously unrealistic perceptions about fire and underestimate the speed at which it spreads. Furthermore, the survey revealed that most respondents have had personal experience with fire alarms at home and other locations, yet a majority acted, or failed to act, in ways

that significantly increased their risk had a real fire occurred.

"NFPA statistics show that, on average, a U.S. household will contact the fire department twice in their lifetime. Despite this fact, NFPA's new survey results clearly indicate that Americans don't think of fire as a major risk in their lives," says Dr. John Hall, NFPA's assistant vice president of Fire Analysis and Research. "Until people become more knowledgeable about the real potential for fire, especially in their homes, we will continue to suffer thousand of fire deaths and tens of thousands of fire injuries in the U.S. each year."

While more than half of the survey respondents said they have a home escape plan, only 31% of that group practiced it, which means that, overall, only 16% of respondents have developed and practiced an escape plan. Of those who hadn't practiced, 38% never thought about practicing a plan or claimed they don't have the time; 33% said practice wasn't necessary, often because they thought their home layout was so easy to escape; and another 10% believed practicing escape plans wasn't necessary for able-bodied adults.

In addition, although 39% of respondents had had home smoke detectors go off in the past year, only 4% reacted immediately as though there might be fire. Of the majority (81%) who assumed it was a nuisance alarm, 22% reacted by disabling the detector, which is "a highly hazardous action to take," according to Dr. Hall.

"The findings from NFPA's new survey will not surprise public fire safety educators who know that most people are overconfident about fire safety," says Meri-K Appy, NFPA's vice president for

public education. "While our intention is never to frighten anyone, we desperately want the public to understand that their window of opportunity to safely escape a fire is excruciatingly small, and that they must learn how to use those minutes appropriately to survive."

NFPA chose "Know When to Go: React Fast to Fire!" as the theme for 1997 Fire prevention Week, October 5-11 last year. Incorporated into the local campaigns of fire departments throughout North America, the theme worked to educate the public about the extreme importance of responding immediately to early warning signs of fire in all locations, and how best to react if a fire occurs.

Other key findings from NFPA's survey include the following:

Men are about equally as likely to have a home escape plan as women, but are more likely to have practiced it. Men are also more likely than women (16% vs. 8%) to say they would take potentially dangerous actions if a fire alarm sounded at work.

More than 35% of the people who have been in a public place when the alarm did go off did not leave the building. In explaining why, 39% of the group that decided not to leave simply *assumed* it was not a real fire.

In restaurants or theaters, 85% of respondents said they would leave immediately if a fire alarm sounded; in malls, 83% said they would exit immediately. Some people said that in a mall they would wait to leave until the crowds thinned out. ♦

***Statewide Conference for
Juvenile Firesetter
Intervention Programs
November 5-7, 1998***

MFIRS CORNER

It's summertime again (almost) and we need your help to get the most accurate data possible for the fire problems you may encounter in the next few months.

Fireworks

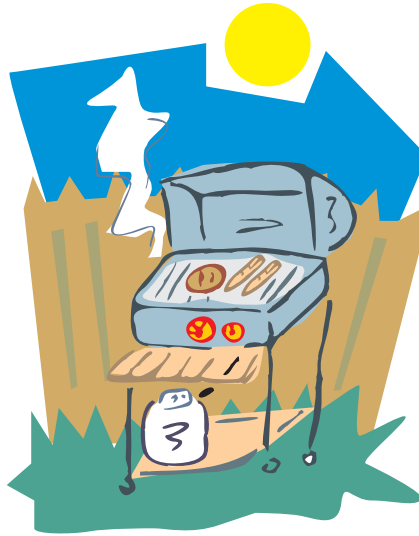
Enter **Code 63- Fireworks** for Form of Heat of Ignition on all fires caused by fireworks. Please submit any fires caused by fireworks, even if they do not result in a dollar loss. Your cooperation will help us explain the dangers associated with these devices.

LP-Gas Grills

Along with fireworks, LP-gas grills will be among the seasonal problems for fire departments. To accurately code a gas grill fire, please note the following:

Enter **Code 26- Open Grill** for Equipment Involved in Ignition

Enter **Code 65- Fuel** for Form of



Material First Ignited

Enter **Code 14- LP-gas** for Type of Material First Ignited

Also, if the make and model of the equipment is unknown, please write *gas grill* in the space provided.

Thank you for your help with this matter. Have a great summer!

1996 County Profiles

The *1996 County Profiles* are finished and available by request by calling Amy Marie Uzdevinis, the Research Analyst, at the Office of the State Fire Marshal. (978) 567-3382. County profiles are a summary of the fire problem by county with statistics on basic fire incidents, residential structure fires, fires by month, day and time, arsons, and community statistics on totals and casualties. ♦



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES
P.O. Box 1025
Stow, MA 01775